

Mathison-Menzies Small House
24 Arnold Street
Providence
Providence County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-215

HABS
RI,
4-PROV,
115-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

NATHAN MASON-MENZIES SWEET HOUSE

Address: 34 Arnold Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.
Plat 15, lot 303.

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RI,
4-PROV,
115-

Present Owner David B. Mathewson
and Occupant:

Present Use: Dwelling.

Brief Statement This is a small frame house, typical of the
of Significance: 1840's.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1791 Christopher Arnold in his Will devises all his property to his three children: James, Christopher and Sarah Godfrey, widow. - Wills Book 7, page 391, in Providence City Hall.
- 1841 Christopher C and Lydia A Godfrey, heirs of Sarah Godfrey sell for \$400 to Nathan Mason a certain piece of land bounded N by Arnold Street 71'; S by George Peck, 71'; being 87' deep. - Deed Book 67, page 278, in Providence City Hall.
- 1842 Nathan Mason sells to Reuben Varney for \$2400 a certain piece of land with DWELLING HOUSE bounded N by Arnold Street 45'; S by George Peck and E and W by grantor. - Deed Book 84, page 20, in Providence City Hall.
- 1843 Reuben Varney issues quit claim deed to this property to Nathan Mason. - Deed Book 84, page 31, in Providence City Hall.
- 1853 Nathan Mason sells the property to Menzies Sweet for \$2600. -Deed Book 134, page 197 in Providence City Hall.
- 1891 Menzies Sweet's heirs sell the property to Charles and Mary Meehan. being the same property conveyed to Menzies Sweet by deed from Nathan Mason in 1853. - Deed Book 355, page 445, in Providence City Hall.

The Meekans owned the property until

1922 Property taxed to Daniel Hearn and taxed to the following...

1922 Arcemino D Rodriguez and wf Sabina

1925 George Rose

1926 Antonio Lima and wife Marie M

1934 Proprietors of Swan Pt Cemetery

1945 Jos F Crotty & wf Clara A

1948 F Dyer, M L Nelson, E Dyer Jr

1951 David G Keith & Wf Isabella

1956 Martha M Morrison

1959 Peter Kilham & wife Frances B

2. Date of erection: 1841-1842

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
April 1962

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This frame house, built in the 1840's, has Greek Revival details typical of the smaller, simpler houses of this period.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Rectangular building about 33' (five bays) x 24', two-and-a-half stories, facing north. On sloping lot with cellar at ground level in rear.
2. Foundations: Fieldstone sides and rear, regular ashlar granite in front.
3. Wall construction: Heavy timber frame; clapboards, average 4" exposure; paneled corner pilasters.

4. Stoops: Granite entrance stoop, two steps.
5. Chimneys: Two inside brick chimneys.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doors and doorways: Six-panel main entrance door probably later, side lights and top light with lead mullions, doorway framed with paneled pilasters and deep entablature.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Six over six light double hung windows. No shutters.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable, asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice: Mutule cornice with very simple moldings, horizontal cornice carried across gable ends at the sides of the house forming pediments.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Short central-entrance hall, probably originally five-room plan, rear rooms now somewhat altered, front rooms intact.
2. Stairways: Main stair in entrance hall to second floor; U-shape, open well, open string, fan step ends, two slender rectangular balusters per step, turned newels, slender turned handrail. Enclosed rear stairway at southeast corner of house continues to third floor.
3. Flooring: Wide board floors.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, papered or painted.
5. Door: First floor doors with two tall vertical panels, other doors with four flat panels, typical Greek Revival moldings with flattened ogee profile.
6. Trim: Pilaster trim, face of architraves stepped back in three flat shallow levels, corner blocks. Under-window panels in principal rooms match doors.
7. Hardware: Miscellaneous later hardware.
8. Lighting: Electric.

9. Heating: Central heating plus four fireplaces. Cooking fireplace with oven and cauldron in cellar; simple marble mantel on one first-floor fireplace, simple one-story wood mantel on other first-floor fireplace, similar wood mantel on second floor. One closed fireplace on second floor.

D. Site

General setting and orientation: Faces north, house on sidewalk line at the front. Large garden in rear, in process of new landscaping.

Prepared by Osmund H. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
April 1962